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UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM PATTERNS--A SURVEY OF BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS IN THE HUMANITIES. (TITLE SUPPLIED).

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A STUDY OF UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM PATTERNS IN THE HUMANITIES WAS CONDUCTED TO DETERMINE WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL CREDITS NECESSARY FOR GRADUATION MUST BE IN THE AREA IN WHICH THE STUDENT MAJORS. THE STUDY IS CONCERNED NOT WITH DETAILS OF SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS, BUT WITH BROAD REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE AND THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE WITH A MAJOR IN ENGLISH, SPANISH, OR SPEECH AND DRAMA. RESULTS INDICATE THAT THE AVERAGE REQUIREMENT FOR A MAJOR IN ENGLISH IS 45 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE AND 50 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE. FOR BOTH THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE AND THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN SPANISH AND THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN SPEECH AND DRAMA, THE AVERAGE REQUIREMENT IS 25 PERCENT. FOR A BACHELOR OF ARTS IN SPEECH AND DRAMA THE AVERAGE REQUIREMENT IS 24 PERCENT. INFORMATION IS ALSO PROVIDED ON THE DIVERSITY OF REQUIREMENTS, SIMILARITY IN DEGREE PROGRAMS, AND PERCENTAGE OF CREDITS WHICH A MAJOR IN ENGLISH, SPANISH, OR SPEECH AND DRAMA MUST ACQUIRE IN NON-MAJOR AREAS OF STUDY. THIS DOCUMENT WAS PUBLISHED IN "UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM PATTERNS--A SURVEY OF BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS IN SELECTED FIELDS, 1962-63," 1965, PAGES 33-44, AND IS AVAILABLE FOR 35 CENTS FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF DOCUMENTS, U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20402. (BN)

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Chapter V

HUMANITIES

Part I: English

by

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The Sample

In English, 267 questionnaires were distributed. Six institutions did not reply, four declined to participate in the survey, and one sent in the questionnaire after the tabulation was complete, so that a total of 257 were returned in time, or approximately 96 percent of the sample. All but three of the returned questionnaires were usable, or became usable after further correspondence and reference to catalogs. The survey is based, therefore, on the practices of 254 institutions.

A number of English departments would have preferred other classifications of knowledge than those appearing on the questionnaire. Many regard history as one of the humanities, for example, rather than as a social science. Clearly, there is no universally accepted classification of the subjects in the college curriculum. Nevertheless, by the exercise of ingenuity and at the expense of a number of compromises, 254 of the 257 institutions were able to describe their curriculums reasonably well by means of the classifications used in the questionnaire.

Although information was collected about teacher preparation programs, this publication confines itself to programs leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science. Data presented in the table are based on 247 B.A. and 23 B.S. programs. The total exceeds 254 because 18 institutions offer English majors leading to both degrees, while 229 offer only the B.A. and 5 the B.S. On the other hand, 2 of the responding institutions grant teacher education degrees exclusively.

[1] Specialist for College English.

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In comparing the statistics for the B.S. programs with those for the B.A., the reader should remember that 23 responses are a very small sampling compared to 247. Further, the institutions granting the B.S. are a very disparate group, including, in order of frequency, (1) State institutions not legally authorized to grant the B.A. degree; (2) institutions at which the B.S. degree provides to the student a means of avoiding language study or other B.A. requirements, including a few schools where mathematics or science requirements are reduced despite the name of the degree; and (3) a few church-affiliated institutions in which the B.A. is still primarily granted only for classical studies. With more than 11 times as many B.A. as B.S. programs, one would naturally expect the extremes reported in the B.A.-granting institutions to be greater, as they are; however, the middle scores of the two groups are relatively close — at many points, almost identical.

The Mean Scores

The differences, as well as the similarities, between the two English degree curriculums can be easily ascertained by comparison of the relevant figures in each of the vertical columns of table 8. For example, the figures at the top left of each cell, indicating the mean or average requirements in the two curriculums, show that the average requirement in English for a B.S. with an English major is 27 percent and, in other humanities, 18 percent; thus, 45 percent is the average total requirement in humanities for this degree. The average requirement in English for a B.A. with an English major is 28 percent, and, in other humanities, 22 percent; thus, 50 percent is the average total requirement in humanities here. The chief difference in emphasis between the B.S. and B.A. English majors is that the latter programs put greater stress on language study. The rest of the table shows that the two differently labeled majors are substantially identical, except that the B.S. programs require, on the average, 2 percent more hours of natural sciences or mathematics than the B.A. programs (approximately one 3-semester-hour course).

The Fifth Decile Scores

In a large randomly selected sample, one would ordinarily expect the fifth decile to approximate the mean. In the humanities other than English, however, the average exceeds the fifth decile in the B.S. and B.A. programs by 3 and 2 percent, respectively. When

TABLE 8. — Credits allocated to specified areas of study, as percents of total credits required for graduation with a major in English, by type of degree: Aggregate United States, 1962-63

Curriculum	No. of curriculums	Value symbols*	Percent of required credits allocated to:						
			Humanities		Natural sciences and mathematics	Social sciences	Other	Physical education and R.O.T.C.	Electives
			English	Other					
(1)	(2)		(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
English, B.S.	23	M	27	18	12	8	3	2	30
		H	32	42	18	17	14	6	62
		D9	31	41	17	16	13	5	42
		D5	28	15	11	7	2	2	32
		D1	19	5	6	0	0	0	14
		L	18	4	4	0	0	0	6
English, B.A.	247	M	28	22	9	9	2	2	29
		H	45	55	19	28	18	10	61
		D9	33	36	13	15	5	4	41
		D5	27	20	9	9	0	2	29
		D1	23	11	5	5	0	0	16
		L	16	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Symbols: M = the mean or average of the percentage values in the array under consideration; the mean or average percentage values may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
H = the highest percentage value shown in the array.
D9 = the value that best represents the level above which approximately 10 percent of the total number of curriculums fall.
D5 = the value that best represents the midpoint in the array.
D1 = the value that best represents the level below which approximately 10 percent of the total number of curriculums fall.
L = the lowest percentage value shown in the array.

the mean tends to exceed the median, it indicates a tendency toward concentration of values in the lower part of the scale. This situation could arise from the fact that the sample included church-related institutions, which tended to require substantially more philosophy and religion than most of the other institutions. Even though these groups represent a minority of those sampled, their emphasis on these subjects is sufficient to elevate the average of the whole group.

In the column labeled "Other," one finds a similar effect, but for a different reason. This rubric included psychology, geography, education, and miscellaneous fields not categorized on the questionnaire. Here, the scores for both the B.S. and B.A. programs are again higher for the mean than for the fifth decile (the difference in B.A. programs being significant because it again is sufficient to account for a difference of approximately one 3-semester-hour course).

An examination of the data shows that the course causing most of the variation was psychology. In institutions which once were primarily or exclusively teacher-preparatory institutions and which still prepare many teachers, the equivalent of about 6 semester-hours of psychology is likely to be required. However, the great majority of colleges have no psychology requirements for the English major, although some students take it as an elective or as a way of meeting some other requirement. Most students preparing to teach in the elementary and secondary schools are required to complete a course in psychology. This general tendency not to require psychology for students majoring in English except prospective teachers has important implications for those English professors who, in interpreting literature, assume student knowledge of psychology.

Diversity of Requirements

The importance of the high and low figures is that they illustrate the extreme diversity of curriculum patterns for an English major in American higher education. Requirements in English courses vary from 18 to 32 percent in B.S. programs, and from 16 to 45 percent in B.A. programs. In terms of a 120-semester-hour program, the variation would be roughly from 19 to 54 semester-hours. In an institution requiring, for all students, 12 semester-hours (in a 120 semester-hours degree program) of English in the lower division, a 19-hour requirement specifically for the English major necessitates only 7 hours in advanced, or upper

division, courses. At the upper end of the scale, a requirement of 54 semester-hours for an English major allots all but 6 semester-hours of half the college program to English.

Because the questionnaire did not differentiate between English as a general requirement or as required specifically for an English major, these figures overstate the English requirement for the latter by combining it with the general requirement. Conversely, the classification system causes an understatement of the requirements in the humanities other than English for an English major. In comparing the right-hand column under "Humanities" in table 8 with the corresponding column in other tables in this study, one must remember that required lower division courses in English are included under the "Humanities" column for other curriculums, but under the English ("Major area of concentration") column for English curriculums.

The widest variation occurs in the proportion of the curriculum allocated to electives. At some institutions students majoring in English may find every hour prescribed; at others more than three-fifths of the program is devoted to electives. Proportions range from 6 to 62 percent in B.S. programs and from 0 to 61 percent in B.A. programs. The actual range of choice, which is likely to be restricted by scheduling practices and the availability of courses, may be smaller, however, than the figures suggest.

Figures taken from the extremes, of course, suggest more diversity than exists in the greatest number of institutions. Eliminating the top and bottom 10 percent from consideration will enable the reader to see more clearly the range of variation among the great majority (80 percent) of the respondent institutions.

The Central 80 Percent

Among the central 80 percent of the respondent institutions, there appears to be some rough agreement about the proper requirement in English for an English major. Although the requirements for the B.S. vary from 19 percent (first decile) to 31 percent (ninth decile) in this range, the requirements for the B.A., which is granted by a much larger group of institutions, vary only from 23 to 33 percent, i.e., from 28 to 40 semester-hours in 120 semester-hour degree programs. The differences might be further reduced through study of the transcripts of individual graduates, for interested students probably strengthen their required major programs by electing additional courses in the subject.

Eliminating the top and bottom deciles from consideration markedly reduces the range of variation in other categories as well. Nevertheless, considering only requirements for the B.A. degree, we find the institutions at the ninth decile devoting more than 3 times as much of the total curriculum to humanities other than English as those at the first decile (36 percent v. 11 percent), and 3 times as much to the social sciences (15 percent v. 5 percent).

Furthermore, even after the extremes are eliminated, a diversity of philosophy about the place of electives in the English major persists. The ninth decile of institutions offering the B.A. programs allows more than 2½ times as much choice as the 1st decile (41 percent v. 16 percent). But this analysis also makes clear that in most American institutions the principle of electives is solidly established, for even at the first decile, at least in theory, an English major may choose about one-sixth of his courses of study.

Average Requirements for the English Major in Semester-Hours

For the convenience of the reader, the mean, or average, requirements devoted to the various categories of the curriculum are summarized in table 9, both for the B.S. and B.A., first in terms of the percentage of total number of hours for graduation, and secondly in the approximate equivalent of those percentages in semester-hours in a 120 semester-hour degree program.

TABLE 9. — Summary of average number of credits allocated to specified areas in programs for an English major, as (*a*) percents of total credits required and (*b*) semester-hour credits in a 120 semester-hour program, by type of degree: Aggregate United States, 1962-63

Area of study	Mean percent of total credits required[1]		Approximate number of semester-hours (in a 120 semester-hour program)[1]	
	B.A.	B.S.	B.A.	B.S.
English	28%	27%	34	32
Other humanities	22	18	26	22
Natural sciences and mathematics	9	12	11	14
Social sciences	9	8	11	10
Other	2	3	2	4
Physical education and R.O.T.C.	2	2	2	2
Electives	29	30	35	36

[1] Totals do not equal 100 percent or 120 semester-hours, respectively, because of rounding.

Part II: Spanish; Speech and Drama

by

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Questionnaires for Spanish were distributed to a stratified sample of 216 institutions. Two follow-up inquiries were made: the first by mail, the second by telegram. Replies were received from all 216 respondents by mail, telegram, or telephone. Twenty-six replies, however, indicated that the institution did not wish to participate in the study — some because of staff shortages, some because of State regulations limiting their participation in questionnaire surveys, and a few because they did not believe their curriculums could be properly reflected in the questionnaire. In all, 185 questionnaires were returned, or 85 percent of the total distributed.

Of the 185 forms received, 7 indicated offering no major in Spanish, although the liberal arts colleges in this group had reported degrees in Spanish in 1959-60, the year of the data from which the sample was drawn. Sixteen questionnaires were returned uncompleted, and three arrived after the data had been compiled. The report on Spanish, therefore, is based on 159 replies. Of these, nine were from institutions awarding both the B.A. and B.S. degrees in Spanish. A total of 147 institutions reported awarding only the B.A., and 3 institutions, only the B.S. This report is based therefore on 156 B.A. and 12 B.S. curriculums in Spanish.

For distribution of questionnaires in speech and drama (a single category combining both these subjects), a stratified sample of 241 institutions was used. After two follow-up inquiries, 210 institutions, or 87 percent of the sample, returned completed questionnaires. As in the Spanish survey, a number of other institutions replied by letter, telephone, or telegram, but did not participate in the survey.

Of the 210 forms received, 24 indicated offering no major in speech and drama, 4 indicated that only the Bachelor of Fine Arts was awarded in this field, 3 arrived after the material was tabulated, and 1 described a non-standard program which was not suitable for inclusion in this report. The report on speech and drama covers the remaining 178 institutions. Of these, 23 offer both the B.A. and B.S. degree in speech and drama, 151 offer only the

[1] Specialist for the Humanities.

B.A., and 4 offer only the B.S. This report, therefore, is based on 174 B.A. and 27 B.S. curriculums in speech and drama.

The Major

Table 10 gives the percentages of total credits necessary for graduation in different areas of study in undergraduate curriculums for Spanish and for speech and drama majors. It is particularly important to distinguish requirements in a humanities major from other humanities requirements, since the other humanities requirements — for example, English and foreign languages — were found in all curriculums studied and constitute a much larger part of the total curriculum in humanities majors than do the natural sciences or the social sciences.

Requirements for the major itself are remarkably consistent. The mean or average requirements for both the B.S. and B.A. in Spanish and for the B.S. in speech and drama are 26 percent of the total curriculum, and 24 percent for the B.S. in speech and drama. These requirements are slightly lower than those for the B.S. and B.A. in English (27 and 28 percent, respectively), approximately equal to those in the physical sciences and mathematics (except the B.S. in chemistry, 30 percent), and higher than those in the social sciences (20-24 percent).

Other Humanities Requirements

All majors, irrespective of the field of concentration, are required to take substantial proportions of their total curriculum in humanities. For majors in Spanish, these requirements average 21 percent of the total curriculum for the B.S. degree and 20 percent for the B.A. degree. In speech and drama, majors must take an average of 20 percent of the total curriculum in humanities other than the major itself for the B.S. degree, and 26 percent for the B.A. The range of requirements in this area is extreme: from 5 percent of the total curriculum to 55 percent.

Combining the major requirements with other humanities requirements, the total average humanities requirements for majors in Spanish range from 46 percent for the B.A. in Spanish to 47 percent for the B.S., and in speech and drama, from 46 percent for the B.S. to 50 percent for the B.A., with considerable variation among individual institutions. For the student majoring in Spanish or in speech and drama, therefore, half or nearly half of his 4 years of undergraduate study, on the average, will be in the humanities.

The heavy concentration of requirements in the humanities, especially those in areas other than the major, is accounted for, in almost all institutions, by English and foreign languages. Many institutions, especially the church-affiliated ones, also require substantial amounts of course work in philosophy, religion, or theology. Where such requirements are prominent in the curriculum, they permit relatively few free elective courses.

Natural Sciences

Students majoring in humanities are required to take, on the average, a much smaller percentage of their course work in the natural sciences than science majors are required to take in the humanities. The mean requirement in natural sciences runs from 7 percent for the B.A. in speech and drama to 9 percent for the B.S., and from 8 per cent for the B.A. in Spanish to 10 percent for the B.S. As might be expected, requirements are slightly higher in science for the B.S. than for the B.A., though not significantly higher.

Mathematics

Mean requirements in mathematics are extremely low for majors in Spanish or in speech and drama: 3 percent of the total curriculum for the B.S. in Spanish, and 2 percent for the other degree programs reported in this chapter. A number of institutions, in fact, reported *no* requirements in mathematics. In addition, many institutions require mathematics *or* science in stated amounts, so that some students may be graduated with no college mathematics and others with no college science. Since our practice in editing questionnaires was to divide a combined requirement among the alternative subjects (e.g., a 12-hour requirement in mathematics *or* science was shown as 6 hours in each), the figures for these subjects in table 10 may not reflect the actual amounts of course work taken by most students.

Social Sciences

Mean requirements in the social sciences show little variation for the different degrees and majors reported here. They are at approximately the same level as the requirements in the natural sciences: 9 percent of the total requirements for both B.S. and B.A. curriculums in speech and drama, 10 percent for the B.A. in Spanish, and 11 percent for the B.S. in Spanish. As in the natural

TABLE 10. — Credits allocated to specified areas of study, as percents of total credits necessary for graduation with a major in Spanish or Speech and Drama, by type of degree: Aggregate United States, 1962-63

Curriculum	No. of curriculums	Value symbols*	Percent of required credits allocated to:									
			Humanities		Natural sciences	Mathematics	Social sciences	Geography	Psychology	Physical education and R.O.T.C.	Other	Electives
			Major area of concentration	Other than major area								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Spanish, B.S.	12	M	26	21	10	3	11	0	0	1	0	27
		H	42	48	19	10	16	0	2	5	2	49
		D9	42	48	19	10	16	0	0	0	0	49
		D5	27	17	8	3	11	0	0	0	0	27
		D1	12	9	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
		L	12	9	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
Spanish, B.A.	156	M	26	20	8	2	10	0	0	2	0	31
		H	53	55	18	6	20	2	4	9	2	58
		D9	35	30	12	5	13	0	2	4	0	46
		D5	27	18	8	2	10	0	0	2	0	31
		D1	20	10	5	0	5	0	0	0	0	15
		L	6	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Speech and drama, B.S.	27	M	26	20	9	2	9	0	1	2	0	31
		H	48	41	19	6	17	2	5	5	0	65
		D9	36	31	15	5	13	0	4	4	0	50
		D5	24	21	10	2	10	0	0	3	0	29
		D1	19	8	5	0	4	0	0	0	0	18
		L	19	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	12

Speech and drama, B.A.	174	M	24					26					7					2					9					0			
		H					48					52				14					8				22				3	
		D9				30				38					11				5				12				0		
		D5			23				27					7				0				9				0			
		D1		19					16				5				0				5				0				
		L	10					6					0				0				2				0				

Speech and drama, B.A.	174	M	1					2					0					27												
		H				9				10					9						49								
		D9			3				4					9					43										
		D5		0					3				0					28											
		D1	0					0					0					13											
		L																0											

*Symbols: M = the mean or average of the percentage values in the array under consideration; the mean or average percentage values may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
H = the highest percentage value shown in the array.
D9 = the value that best represents the level above which approximately 10 percent of the total number of curriculums fall.
D5 = the value that best represents the midpoint in the array.
D1 = the value that best represents the level below which approximately 10 percent of the total number of curriculums fall.
L = the lowest percentage value shown in the array.

sciences and mathematics, there is considerable range in social science requirements in all four curriculums. Fifth-decile values for social sciences are slightly higher than those for natural sciences, indicating a larger social science requirement in more than half of the responding institutions.

Other Requirements

These requirements include geography, psychology, physical education or R.O.T.C., and other requirements not specified. Mean requirements in physical education or R.O.T.C. are consistently about 2 percent (lower for the B.S. in Spanish). For psychology, the mean requirement is smaller, running to 1 percent or less. Some institutions define psychology as a social science and include it in general social science requirements. Geography and other requirements were so small that their means had to be rounded to zero.

Electives

Though there is considerable variation in means for electives (from 27 percent to 31 percent), the variation is not consistent for any single degree or major.

The most significant finding about electives is that an enormous range exists in the amounts of electives permitted. Some institutions permit no electives at all in the curriculum for either the B.S. or B.A. degrees in Spanish or for the B.A. degree in speech and drama. At the other extreme, some institutions permit nearly one-half to two-thirds of the curriculum (49 to 65 percent) in free electives. Conversely, this means that, among institutions offering these degrees and majors, the prescribed portion of the curriculum may vary from as little as one-third of the total to all of it.

Similarity in Degree Programs

Requirements for the B.A. and B.S. degrees are either identical, as in the examples noted above, or only slightly different, as table 10 indicates. Of the 12 institutions offering the B.S. degree in Spanish, 9 also offer the B.A. in Spanish, and 3 of these reported identical requirements for both degrees. Of the 27 institutions offering the B.S. degree in speech and drama, 23 also offer the B.A. with the same major, and 2 of these had identical requirements for both degrees.